



Security Council

Distr.: General

14 July 2000

Original: English

**Letter dated 13 July 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations addressed
to the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to forward a letter from Mr. Branko Lukovac, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Montenegro, addressed to the President of the Security Council regarding representation of the Republic of Montenegro in international relations (see annex). An aide-mémoire of the Government of the Republic of Montenegro on the matter and some facts from Montenegrin history are enclosed with the letter (see appendices).

I should be grateful if you would circulate the text of the present letter, its annex and appendixes, as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Samuel Žbogar
Chargé d'affaires a.i.



**Annex to the letter dated 13 July 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires
a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations
addressed to the President of the Security Council**

The Chairman of the Security Council circulated on 21 June 2000 the non-paper entitled "Montenegro and the Balkan crisis" (S/2000/611), which reflects some views of the Government of Montenegro on problems in the region and on relations between Montenegro and Serbia. In paragraph 6 of the annex to that document it is stated, *inter alia*, that "... Montenegro does not accept the leadership of Serbia and its political and diplomatic representatives and services, misusing the administration of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to be the representatives of the policy and interest of Montenegro. They cannot do this on behalf of the state of Montenegro in future ... Montenegro will independently express, represent and protect its policy and its interests and inform other countries and international organizations thereon, either directly or through its authorized representatives."

Since we feel that some further clarifications are necessary, please find enclosed an aide-mémoire of the Government of Montenegro, stating reasons for such a move, as well as some facts from Montenegrin history, for consideration together with the above-mentioned non-paper.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter, together with its enclosures, circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Branko Lukovac

**Appendix I to the letter dated 13 July 2000 from the Chargé
d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the
United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council**

Aide-mémoire of the Government of the Republic of Montenegro

Montenegro, as one of the federal republics of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, has a very long history of statehood, lasting many centuries. Under specific circumstances, after the First World War, as a kingdom, it was first annexed by force and then made part of the newly created state of the Serbs, the Croats and the Slovenes, later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia; in the outburst of fascism, that state crumbled at the very beginning of the Second World War; Montenegro then joined the new Yugoslavia (known as the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), as a state of equal members and nations, in 1945. That state dissolved during the years 1991 and 1992, after the prevalence of the hegemonic and nationalist projects and forces. In April 1992, Montenegro and Serbia formed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as a federation consisting of two equal states. However, the territory of former Yugoslavia has been notorious for the whole decade of the 1990s for the wars fought there (in Slovenia and Croatia, as early as 1991 and 1992; then in Bosnia, until the end of 1995; and finally in Kosovo, where the international community still tries to establish peace and security for all citizens).

For Montenegro, life in the common state, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, since its inception, has not accomplished in any way the commitment of our people to its equal position as well as for the eventual dominance of democratic values and orientation, the rule of law, economic recovery, reforms and prosperity, or the cooperation with the world, strengthening of good-neighbourly relations and wider integrative processes. The position of Montenegro in the common state worsened, especially after the presidential and parliamentary elections in Montenegro, in 1997 and 1998, when the forces standing for democratic and economic transformation and pro-European orientation managed to achieve supremacy in the elections. That was the reason why the authorities in Serbia have never accepted the outcome of that election and have obstructed the formation of bodies of the common, federal state that would be based on the majority will of the citizens in Montenegro. Instead of them, they appointed their partisan and political sympathizers, who are now opposition in Montenegro, to be representatives from Montenegro to the federal bodies. Naturally, it was not acceptable for the democratically elected leadership, for the Montenegrin government and its bodies. Actually, since then, Montenegro has no access to the federal authorities, it does not participate in their work and, consequently, does not accept them as common, and does not recognize their legitimacy.

Moreover, the federal authorities constituted in that way have been used not only against the will of the Montenegrin legal authorities, but against Montenegro, with a view to its economic and general exhaustion, political destabilization and the toppling of the democratically elected government, without shrinking from attempts to provoke internal conflicts or a civil war. Here are just a few illustrative indicators:

(a) The negotiations concerning the Kosovo crisis, which ended in failure and led to the NATO bombing, were held without representatives of the Montenegrin authorities. The Supreme Defense Council made its decisions without participation of the president of Montenegro and those decisions had heavy consequences in human lives, material damages, economic and overall activity and the development of Montenegro and its international cooperation. Of course, the biggest tragedy was suffered and is still suffered by all peoples in Kosovo, including the Serbian people themselves. In addition to causing human and material losses, the Yugoslav Army was misused in an attempt of taking over some functions of the government authorities of Montenegro.

(b) The representatives of the legal authorities of Montenegro have been removed from all institutions of the federal state and the work of these bodies is used primarily against the interests of Montenegro. That is the case with many federal bodies: defence, internal and foreign affairs, finances, foreign trade, customs, central bank. Thus, for instance:

(i) The central bank, working without participation of Montenegrin representatives, kept issuing additional money and, in that way, undermined, *inter alia*, the economic and social security and political stability in Montenegro;

(ii) Montenegrin companies were not approved for import and export licences, which disabled their normal operation;

(iii) The customs revenues were not used for funding obligations towards Montenegro;

(iv) Initiatives for joining some international alliances were made against the will of Montenegro and were directed against it;

(v) The Yugoslav Army has been used against the interests of Montenegro; for pressures and threats against its institutions; for interrupting its foreign trade exchange and good-neighbourly relations; as a service for propaganda from Belgrade towards Montenegro; for training paramilitary formations that may be misused against Montenegro;

(vi) Joint judicial authorities are put in the function of close partisan and political interests of Serbia and work under their orders;

(c) In 1998, the Federal Government stopped paying Montenegro the contribution for pension insurance of the persons for which it has such an obligation, from the joint funds of the federal budget;

(d) For quite a long time, competent federal authorities have been denying overflight licences to aircraft that would transport foreign tourists to Montenegro, or that would carry prominent foreign officials for meetings with members of Montenegrin authorities;

(e) Furthermore, the Serbian government — in response to the measures taken by the Government of Montenegro in order to protect the economic and social security of its citizens — imposed a comprehensive, heavy blockage of the overall payment operations and commodity trade with Montenegro that lasted for several months. It should be remembered that Montenegro, traditionally, used to buy more than 70 per cent of its essential foodstuffs and more than 80 per cent of drugs on the

Serbian market and that many firms were tailored to suit the needs of that market and were thus almost completely dependant on the trade with Serbia.

Due to severe violation of the Constitution and misuse of numerous federal institutions, Montenegro had to take steps to protect its interests, economy and citizens, as already stated. For these reasons, Montenegro assumed control of the activities in: foreign trade and import and export of goods and services; insurance and investment guarantees; production cooperation and joint ventures; tax system; customs; control of borders with other countries; monetary operations by legalizing German mark as a parallel tender, together with the local currency — the dinar. Systematic undermining of economy and overall life in Montenegro by the Belgrade authorities was, in that way, partially alleviated.

Owing to the increasingly massive and strong support of its citizens, Montenegro managed to resist such pressure; to preserve good inter-ethnic and inter-confessional relations and, on top of it, to offer shelter to tens of thousands of exiled refugees from Kosovo, equally as, in earlier years, it offered shelter to refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (refugees account for about 10 per cent of the present population in Montenegro). Montenegro is firmly committed to strengthening of its democratic course; to needed transformations and economic development and to full cooperation with international community and integration into European processes and strictures. It continues to resist successfully various political, military, security and economic pressures and blockages exerted by Serbia. In that Montenegro enjoys increasing support and assistance, especially of the developed countries, among them the United States of America and Europe, in particular. Montenegro is an active participant in the stability pact for South-eastern Europe, as well as other regional processes (Adriatic-Ionian, Central European Initiative, Southeast European Cooperative Initiative), and it has an ever-wider cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe.

To date, Montenegro has shown a high degree of responsibility to its citizens and to its regional and wider surroundings, when peace and security in the region are concerned.

In spite of diametrically opposed political options in Serbia and Montenegro; entirely unequal relations between the two states, which are supposed to be equal under the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; severe violation of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; permanent attempts of destabilization of Montenegro and violent ousting of its democratically elected government; in spite of constant misuse of federal institutions by Serbia — Montenegro has exhibited patience and a constructive approach, as well as a wish to maintain good relations with Serbia and to keep some form of community with it. To that end, in August 1999, Montenegro offered to the state authorities of Serbia the proposed bases for new relations, that would rest on true equality of the two states and maintain the necessary framework, so that the citizens of both states could take advantage, for their own sake, of all the cultural similarities, historic ties, mutual economic and geographic direction and the benefits of successful integration processes. At the same time, they would be protected against misuses of common institutions which are performed with current authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

But, the state authorities of Serbia turned a deaf ear to such initiatives and proposals of Montenegro and there is no doubt that the present relations of domination suit them more. Both internally and externally, the leadership of Serbia obviously does not intend to give up its present orientation, which, after the four wars, enormous sufferings of people and damages to economy, full international isolation — has brought the country to a complete collapse.

For these reasons, Montenegro decided to deny its trust to the federal administration and its bodies and diplomatic services, fully controlled by the Serbia authorities, to represent Montenegro and its interests before other countries and international organizations. As stated in our document that was circulated by the Chairman of the United Nations Security Council on 21 June 2000, it will do that on its own and through its authorized representatives.

Podgorica, 6 July 2000

Appendix II to the letter of 13 July 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Montenegro: Historical facts

The Slavic social and state community Doclea, "Sclavinia", as the Byzantines called it, was formed at the beginning of the seventh century, on the territory of the previous Roman province Prevalis, within the borders and under the formal sovereignty of the Byzantine Empire. By their arrival and by the forming of their own state, the Slavs have fundamentally changed the situation and demographic composition of the province Prevalis. Doclea was founded on a geographically and historically compact area which covered the wider basin of Skadar lake and its surrounding mountain range. This area, later on, became the territorial base of all later stages of state-political organization of the Montenegrins.

At the end of the tenth century, Doclea was granted the status of independent state by the Byzantines, and Vladimir became the first Duke of Doclea. Independence was acquired by the Docleas people in 1040, and it became a kingdom in 1077, making "Zeta" among the first states in the Balkans to gain independence.

After the death of the first ruler of the dynasty of Vladimir and Vojislavljevic, Zeta was exposed to the permanent political conflicts and disunion among the nobility about who would sit on the throne, which led to the predominance of Byzantium again, and in 1185 it was conquered by the Serbian state Raska and its ruler great duke Nemanja.

By including in his state "the kingdom of Dioclitia and Dalmatia", Nemanjici did not change the order prevailing during its previous independent state life, which had developed as a special tradition. In the second half of the fourteenth century Zeta became independent and separated from the power of the Serbian state under the leadership of Balsici dynasty and Crnojevici dynasty, and later on it became an independent feudal state. The Balsici achieved important territorial expansion through constant fighting against their neighbours: Albanians, Bosnians and Serbian nobility, as well as with Venice and Turkey, which were becoming more and more powerful.

Through the rise of the Crnojevici dynasty, Zeta, that is Montenegro, which is how it has been called ever since and also how the term Montenegrins was created, was constituted as a state, the social order of which was a mixture of feudal and tribal elements. During that period, Turkish attacks were becoming more frequent and stronger and therefore the territory of the Montenegrin state decreased and the people withdrew towards Mount Lovcen. For his new centre, Ivan Crnojevic chose Cetinje, where he built the castle and monastery which became the capital of the narrowed Montenegro, the spiritual and state centre of the liberation movement of Montenegrins during the next five centuries. During the reign of his son, Djuradj, the first printing house of the South Slavs was established in Cetinje in 1493, at which the first book in the Balkans, "Oktoih", was printed in 1494. After the short rule of Djuradj, Montenegro was conquered by the Turks in 1496.

After the establishment of Turkish power, Montenegro was annexed to the province of Skadar. From 1513, Montenegro was organized as a separate territorial

and government unit with an important degree of autonomy. The local government and judiciary were in hands of the permanent resident population, while military service referred only to the population on Montenegrin territory. However, its autonomous position remained untouched until after the Candia war (1645-1669), when full independence was returned to Montenegrins.

The ruling of the population and leading of the country was undertaken by the bishops of Cetinje, the general Gathering of Montenegrins and Gathering of leaders became the main state authorities and the leadership on the lower levels was entrusted to meetings of the nobility. In 1697, Montenegrins elected Danilo the First, a founder of the Petrovic dynasty, as bishop, and from that time an organized struggle for political and religious unity started in the country, which was frequently divided by conflicts among the nobility and islamization of the population.

By strengthening the throne of Peter the First Petrovic (1784-1830), who, according to the majority opinion, was the greatest person in the Montenegrin history, Montenegro made big steps towards establishing its independence. Especially after winning great victories over the more powerful Turkish army, every Turkish influence on Montenegro was eliminated, and it became, de facto, an independent and autonomous state. By merit of Peter the First, Montenegro overcame a long-lasting crisis. He united Montenegrins and their tribes. The influence and connections with Montenegrin coastal populations, who were under Austrian domination, had increased. During the reign of Peter the First, laws were passed by which the traditional, tribal organization of society was left behind and the basis of a modern state and government were created. In the 20 years of his rule, the poet and bishop Peter the Second Petrovic Njegos successfully conducted further building of the Montenegrin state by forming judicial, governmental and military authorities. During his travels he became acquainted with many European state leaders and other important persons, thus making Montenegro reputable all over Europe. By merit of Njegos, through the setting of borders, such as that specified by the agreement made by Austria in 1841, Montenegro became implicitly recognized by the major powers as a truly independent state with recognized borders and territory.

Njegos's successor, Duke Danilo, was more oriented towards the west. After his great military victory over the Turks at Grahovac in 1858, as well as determination of the state boundaries of Montenegro, which was recognized by the representatives of the major powers at the conference held in Constantinople in 1858, he contributed to the formal recognition of the sovereignty of Montenegro.

When, during the eastern crises of 1875-1878, Montenegro won marvellous victories over the Turkish troops (at Vuciji do and Fundina) during the rule of the Duke and King Nikolas, some of its political goals were achieved, including: full international recognition at the Congress of Berlin, where it obtained a part of the sea coast through the returning of Bar and Ulcinj and the cities of Podgorica and Niksic and Kolasin, to Montenegro. It was expanded and its territory was strengthened both economically and through growth of its population. In those expansions both the state and the army showed tolerance concerning the population, so that a great number of Albanians and Muslims continued to live in Montenegro, enjoying full rights, while their leaders got important state and military positions. The struggle of a small Montenegrin people, the only one in the Balkans that succeeded in resisting the Turkish empire through the centuries and in preserving its

freedom and autonomy, gained the sympathy and support of all of Europe. That, *inter alia*, enabled Montenegro to declare itself a kingdom in 1910.

Montenegro entered the First World War immediately after its declaration, fighting on the side of Serbia and the Alliances. After the capitulation of Austro-Hungary in 1916, King Nicolas Petrovic and his government went into exile in Italy, and then to France, from where they did not succeed either in becoming partners in the negotiations and peace conferences nor in promoting their project of federal state organization and the uniting of South Slavic peoples on an equal basis. In 1918 Montenegro was annexed to Serbia and lost its statehood, its army and its dynasty. Although a winning country and ally in the war, Montenegro was not successful in fighting against the plans and interests of Serbia and some big powers, so that, after ten centuries, its name disappeared from the political chart of Europe for the first time.

During that period, the expectations for the economic development and overall transformation of Montenegrin society was not fulfilled, and it remained the least developed area in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Through dictatorship and sharpened, sometimes bloody repressive measures, the regime tried to suppress the increasing dissatisfaction with the economic, political and national situation and the situation of human rights in Montenegro.

Immediately after the beginning of the Second World War, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia crumbled in the tide of fascist Germany and Italy, the freedom-loving tradition of the Montenegrin people was also shown through national rebellion against the Italian conqueror on 13 July 1941, which, by its volume and solidarity, represents a unique example of that kind of event in Europe, and also greatly contributed to the anti-fascistic struggle in Yugoslavia. During the Second World War, the anti-fascistic movement renewed the struggle for the statehood and legal status of Montenegro. It became one of six equal republics in the new Yugoslav federation.

Since 1992, Montenegro, with Serbia, has been part of the federal community of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Notes

- The name Doclea was derived from the name of the Roman town near Podgorica, carrying the same name, and the Illyrian tribe Decleati.
- At the end of the twelfth century, the name Zeta, derived from the Slavic expression for harvesters, which was transformed from the native country of the Slavs, Polablja-East Germany, was used in reference to the state.
- The name Montenegro is derived from the black woods when the centre of the state was moved towards Mount Lovcen -Cetinje.